

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SSC-01 SSM-03 /089 W  
-----016228 090653Z /17

R 081100Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5255  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA  
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0367

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, LY, GE  
SUBJECT: QADHAFI LOSES HIS CHIEF AIDE, LIBYAN/GDR RELATIONS  
STRESSED

1. A KEY CONSIDERATION ARISING OUT OF THE LIBYAN AIR FORCE  
HELICOPTER CRASH IN THE LATE EVENING OF MARCH 6 (WHICH KILLED  
A HIGH LEVEL GDR DELEGATION, LED BY WERNER LAMBERZ, AND  
SEVEN LIBYANS AND WHICH WILL BE SUBJECT OF SUBSEQUENT REPORT  
AS INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE) IS THE EFFECT ON QADHAFI'S  
GOVERNMENT OF THE LOSS OF TWO KEY OFFICIALS, PARTICULARLY  
HIS CHIEF AID  
TAHA SHARIF BIN AMIR.

2. BIN AMIR'S ROLE IN THE QADHAFI REGIME, WHILE NEVER  
FULLY DETAILED, WAS BY ALL ACCOUNTS VERY SIGNIFICANT INDEED.  
BIN AMIR IN FACT FUNCTIONED AS QADHAFI'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT.  
HE WAS NEVER FAR FROM HIS SIDE IN PUBLIC. IN PRIVATE  
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BIN AMIR ATTENDED PRACTICALLY EVERY MEETING BETWEEN  
QADHAFI AND VISITING DIGNITARIES. HIS OFFICE IN  
AZZIZIA BARRACKS WAS ADJACENT TO QADHAFI'S OWN. HE  
MANAGED FLOW OF PAPERS TO QADHAFI AND CONVEYED HIS ORDERS  
TO THE REST OF THE GOVERNMENT. ALWAYS SELF-EFFACING, HE  
APPARENTLY HAD QADHAFI'S FULL CONFIDENCE AND, THOUGH  
WITHOUT PERSONAL POWER, HE PROBABLY BROUGHT SOME MODERATING

INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON QADHAFI. HE CERTAINLY PROVIDED WHATEVER ORDER EXISTED IN THIS RATHER DISORDERLY GOVERNMENT. OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE, HE MADE HIMSELF AVAILABLE TO FOREIGN DIPLOMATS AS A CHANNEL TO QADHAFI WHEN KEY MATTERS AROSE. THUS HIS DEATH HAS TO BE A MAJOR LOSS TO QADHAFI.

3. TO A LESSER EXTENT, THE DEATH OF CHIEF OF PROTOCOL, AHMAD ABU SHAGUR, WILL ALSO BE SERIOUS SETBACK FOR LIBYAN DIPLOMACY. THOUGH NOT BELOVED BY THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, HE WAS ADMIRER, AND RIGHTLY SO, FOR HIS INEXHAUSTIBLE ENERGY AND, IN THE LIBYAN CONTEXT, CONSIDERABLE MANAGEMENT AND EXECUTIVE SKILLS. TO A LARGE EXTENT, LIBYA'S ABILITY TO COPE WITH THE MANY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND UNCEASING FLOW OF FOREIGN VISITORS TO TRIPOLI DEPENDED ON ABU SHAGUR'S UNFLAGGING EFFORTS. THOUGH CONFERENCES AND STATE VISITS TO TRIPOLI WERE NEVER MODELS OF EFFICIENCY, THE FACT THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO TAKE PLACE AT ALL IN THIS MANPOWER SHORT COUNTRY HAS BEEN SOMETHING OF AN ACCOMPLISHMENT.

4. IT WILL NOT BE EASY TO REPLACE THESE MEN, PARTICULARLY BIN AMIR, AND THUS QADHAFI'S ABILITY TO GOVERN THE COUNTRY WILL CERTAINLY BE DEGRADED DURING THE MONTHS AHEAD.

5. IMPACT OF EVENT, AS IT AFFECTED LIBYAN/GDR RELATIONS, WAS DEMONSTRATED AT PUBLIC EULOGY LED BY QADHAFI'S  
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DEPUTY MAJOR JALLUD AND ATTENDED BY SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND BECAUSE OF LATE NOTIFICATION VERY FEW DIPLOMATS. JALLUD DEVOTED MOST OF SPEECH TO EMPHASIZING DEPTH AND CLOSENESS OF GDR/LIBYAN RELATION AND NOTING THAT GERMAN VICTIMS WERE IN LIBYA TO HELP BUILD NEW SOCIETY. AT AIRPORT BODIES OF GERMAN VICTIMS WERE ACCORDED MILITARY HONORS AS THEY WERE LOADED ABOARD LIBYAN PLANE FOR RETURN TO BERLIN. LIBYAN FOREIGN SECRETARY TURAYKI ACCOMPANIED TO OFFER PERSONAL CONDOLENCES TO GDR LEADERS.

6. NOT SURPRISINGLY TRIPOLI IS ABUZZ WITH RUMORS OF POSSIBLE SABOTAGE AND SPECULATION THAT QADHAFI WAS SCHEDULED TO USE FATAL CHOPPER. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THUS FAR FOR SUCH SPECULATION.  
CARLE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS, HELICOPTERS, DEATHS, POLITICAL LEADERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 08 mar 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** QADHAFI LOSES HIS CHIEF AIDE, LIBYAN/GDR RELATIONS STRESSED  
**TAGS:** PGOV, PEPR, LY, GC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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